



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Advisory Board Recommends Expansion of DOE Landfill

The citizens' advisory board to the Oak Ridge Office of the Department of Energy (DOE) has recommended that DOE move expeditiously to expand the CERCLA (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act) waste disposal facility to maximum capacity and begin evaluating the need for an additional landfill. The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) is a federally appointed citizens' panel that provides advice and recommendations to the DOE Oak Ridge Environmental Management Office on its cleanup activities on the Oak Ridge Reservation.

ORSSAB recommended at its July meeting that DOE expand the existing facility in Bear Creek Valley near the Y-12 National Security Complex to its maximum design capacity of 2.2 million cubic yards. The landfill is authorized to receive low-level radioactive waste and can include contaminated soil, sludge, sediment, solid waste, building debris, personal protective equipment, and scrap equipment.

Much of the current waste is coming from demolition activities at East Tennessee Technology Park. The landfill will take a large majority of the building debris and stabilized process equipment from the huge K-25 Building that is being demolished at the park.

Three of the four landfill cells are receiving waste. Cell 1 is already full. Work is underway to expand to a fifth cell that will bring the capacity to 1.7 million cubic yards. However, the most recent estimate for waste from the current baseline cleanup work is 1.9 million cubic yards. Expansion of the facility to include a sixth cell will bring the capacity to about 2.2 million cubic yards, which will take the maximum acreage the landfill is authorized to cover.

But even that is not likely to be enough space to hold waste generated from the Integrated Facility Disposition Program, a plan to eliminate more than 200 excess facilities at Y-12 and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. As a result, ORSSAB recommended that DOE should begin evaluating the need and possible location for a new facility now.

To maximize disposal capacity at the Bear Creek Valley landfill, the board also recommended that DOE implement an aggressive approach to waste sorting and segregating to assure that only the contaminated wastes suitable for the CERCLA facility are placed there and the remaining construction debris be sent to the Y-12 Landfills. DOE has three landfills on the Oak Ridge Reservation that can take the uncontaminated waste. The board recommended that the prepared waste handling plans carefully examine opportunities to ensure that the wastes destined for the Bear Creek Valley CERCLA waste disposal facility is the best disposal option.

The text of the complete recommendation can be found on ORSSAB's website at <http://www.oakridge.doe.gov/em/ssab/recc.htm>.

ORSSAB meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the DOE Information Center, 475 Oak Ridge Turnpike. The meetings are open to the public.